

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

"Peace: Person and Preacher"

Ephesians 2:16-18

Introduction

1. The Gentiles are spiritually bankrupt (vv. 11, 12). Five huge charges are made against them (v. 12). They are virtually outside.

2. But "in Christ" the Gentiles are dramatically "made nigh" and "made one" with the Jews (vv. 13, 14). It is an historic and glorious change. Barriers between Jews and Gentiles are entirely removed "in Christ" (vv. 14, 15).

3. These alterations between Jews and Gentiles take place in and through a person--the Lord Jesus Christ. How this comes about and the results associated therewith are the considerations of the apostle now. Study the peace He has provided for Jews and Gentiles.

1. CHRIST IS OUR PEACE v. 14.

a. Personally

Christ Himself is the peace. The emphatic pronoun makes this sure. It is not just what He did, as necessary as that was and is, but it is in His person that peace is provided. Who He is is as important as what He did.

b. Perfectly

Since Christ is our "peace," the concept of the peace offering is concerned (Lev. 3). He was both sinless and took the fire of divine judgment for us. It speaks of harmony and reconciliation: 1)with God and 2)between Jews and Gentiles. It is all found in Christ. It is not something to initiate, but something to enjoy (cf. 4:3). Tragically, it is so little appreciated among the saints.

c. Practically

There is no class, color, or other carnal differences "in Christ" (Gal. 3:28). The unity of Jew and Gentile is unique. It is "our" peace. Hence, both Jew and Gentile are one with one another. This is extended to manifest the unity of the body (Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12).

2. CHRIST MADE PEACE vv. 14, 15.

a. Completely

The aorist tense of the verb "made" shows the work is done. No one makes peace with God or with Jew and Gentile. It is already done. The verb is also present tense (v. 15). Therefore, He keeps or maintains peace. Every provision is made in the Lord Jesus Christ. The only

reason for its lack of reality is sinful carnal fleshly professing believers.

b. Effectively

Separative items are eliminated in Christ. This includes the "wall of partition" and the enmity of "the law." There is nothing left standing between Jews and Gentiles. It is the most fantastic revelation ever given.

c. Creatively

Reconciliation is the word. It means that God has removed, by Christ's death, the offenses and sin which incurred divine wrath. Now of the two--Jews and Gentiles--He has made "one body." This is a brand new organism. It is not any sort of organizational unity. Moreover, this new body is called "new (fresh) man" (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). It is Christ's death alone which has slain the enmity which had previously existed. To deny the unity is to deny the death. Divisions on a spiritual level are entirely foreign to the body, new man. Divisions, schisms, discord must be called for what they are: Satanic and carnal (sinful nature).

3. CHRIST PREACHED PEACE v. 17.

a. Directly

Paul notes that "having come" our Lord did preach peace. This may be a reference to His post resurrection ministry (Acts 1). He embodied the truth of peace.

b. Indirectly

Through His apostles and later His disciples, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Christ preached peace (Acts 1, cf. with Luke 1). This has reference to the on-going ministry of our Lord.

c. Correctly

The "afar off" ones are the Gentiles. Those "nigh" are the Jews. So the emphasis in this age is towards the Gentiles (Acts 15:13-18). This does not mean, however, that Jews are to be forgotten (Rom. 1:16, 17; 11:5). The preaching of the Gospel is still global as it always has been (Gen. 12). But now it contends for the "body" truth.

Conclusion Peace is now secured. It is obvious, then, to all, that there is an unhindered approach to God through Christ (Rom. 5:2). This is all possible through the person and work of our Lord. No restrictions are placed upon Jew or Gentile. The three prepositions are important: through Christ, in the Spirit, and to the Father. That is God's order. From the peace provided, it is now for Jews and Gentiles to enter into the privileges available. Glory to God.